

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 ACDA-12

AID-05 CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 COME-00 DLOS-09

DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-01 SOE-02 DOE-15 FMC-01 TRSE-00

H-01 INR-10 INT-05 JUSE-00 L-03 NSF-01 OMB-01

PA-01 PM-05 SP-02 SS-15 AGR-01 /143 W

-----052837 180500Z /15

O R 180300Z APR 78

FM AMEMBASSY SUVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7273

INFO AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIS, PLOS, FJ

SUBJECT: SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL FISHERY AGENCY

REF: STATE 095661

1. EMBASSY WELCOMES VISIT BY BUSBY AND FISHERIES EXPERTS AS UNDOUBTEDLY BEST MEANS TO ANSWER OUR AND OUR HOST GOVERNMENTS QUESTIONS ABOUT ITS ROLE AND INTEREST IN RSPFA.

2. JIOJI KOTOBALAVU (JK) PERMANENT SECRETARY OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE WAS QUITE PLEASED ALSO TO HEAR OF THE BUSBY VISIT AND THOUGHT THAT TIMING COULD NOT BE BETTER. ACCORDINGLY SCHEDULE OF APPOINTMENTS WILL BEGIN WITH HIM FRIDAY MORNING 21 APRIL AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WILL INCLUDE ALL OFFICIALS DEALING OR KNOWLEDGEABLE WITH FISHERIES EXCEPT FOR THOSE LIKE MCLOUGHLIN WHO ARE IN GENEVA FOR THE LOS CONFERENCE. WE ARE MAKING APPOINTMENTS ALSO WITH UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH PACIFIC AND SPEC.

3. WE INTEND TO DISCUSS WITH TEAM THE USEFULNESS OF MEETING WITH NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIAN HICOMS WHICH CAN BE ARRANGED THE LAST

MINUTE. WE ARE IN FAVOR OF SUCH A MEETING BECAUSE THEY TOO TALK TO THE FIJIANS AND SEND IN REPORTS. IT WOULD BE USEFUL IF THEY HAD AS MUCH OF AN AUTHORITATIVE EXPLANATION OF U.S. VIEWS AS THE ONE THE FIJIANS WILL BE GETTING FROM THE TEAM.

4. THE DEPARTMENT AND THE TEAM MAY BE INTERESTED IN THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL INSIGHT INTO FIJIAN THINKING AND SOULSEARCHING WHICH JK GAVE US DURING LUNCHEON IN THE RESIDENCE 14 APRIL.

(A) THE PM HAS NOT MADE ANY DECISIONS ON RSPFA FOR THE SIMPLE REASON THAT JK HAS NOT YET PRESENTED TO HIM ISSUES OPTIONS.

(B) JK CONTINUES TO SEE FIJI'S POSITION SOMEWHERE BETWEEN PAPUA NEW GUINEA WHICH (ACCORDING TO JK) ASSERTS SUCH EXCLUSIVE SOVEREIGN RIGHTS OVER RESOURCES IN 200 MILE ZONE AS TO ANTICIPATE THE EXCLUSION FROM RSPFA OF ANY NATION (US) THAT DOES NOT SHARE THIS POINT OF VIEW AND WESTERN SAMOA WHICH WHILE ASSERTING SAME SOVEREIGN RIGHTS APPRECIATES THE NEED OF INCLUDING U.S. IN RSPFA.

(C) DESPITE THIS FINE DISTINCTION JK FOUND HIMSELF SLIDING TOWARDS THE US POSITION BECAUSE HE REPEATEDLY ADMITTED THAT HE COULD NOT SEE HOW THE U.S. CAN BE EXCLUDED FROM SUCH A REGIONAL FISHERIES AGENCY.

(D) THE OTHER ITEM THAT WAS VERY MUCH ON HIS MIND WAS THE PARTICIPATION OF DEPENDENT TERRITORIES IN THEIR OWN RIGHT AND NOT THROUGH "THE METROPOLITAN POWERS." HE SEEMED AT A LOSS TO SUGGEST A SOLUTION TO THIS PROBLEM.

(3) NOTWITHSTANDING FOREGOING WHAT REALLY SEEMS TO TROUBLE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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KOTOBALAVU AND ACCORDING TO HIM RATU MARA AS WELL, IS THE COST OF ESTABLISHING AND OPERATING THE RSPFA. HENCE THE IDEA OF ASSIGNING THE PROPOSED AGENCY'S FUNCTIONS TO THE SPC. THE SPC NOT ONLY SOLVES THE QUESTION OF COSTS BUT PROVIDES A SOLUTION TO THE QUESTION OF DEPENDENCIES SINCE THEY ARE ALREADY IN SPC.

(F) JK CLAIMED THAT THE UK IS IN FAVOR OF THE SPC SOLUTION AND POSSIBLY AUSTRALIA AS WELL, BUT NEW ZEALAND IS THE ONE THAT REALLY OPPOSES IT. ASKED WHY, HE SAID THAT NEW ZEALAND FEARS THAT THE SPC SOLUTION WILL DELAY THE LAUNCHING OF THE AGENCY IN WHICH NZ SEEMS TO BE QUITE INTERESTED. JK SAID THAT "IT AIN'T NECESSARILY SO". IN FACT THE OPPOSITE MAY BE TRUE SINCE THE SPC IS ALREADY CONDUCTING RESEARCH ON FISHERIES.

5. KOTOBALAVU WENT TO THE HEART OF THE PROBLEM WHEN HE SAID THAT THE SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM LEADERS SHOULD HAVE BEEN ADVISED IN ADVANCE OF THE IMPLICATIONS OF THEIR DECISION LAST AUGUST DIRECTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RSPFA. HE SAW IT AS HIS OBLIGATION AS A STAFFER TO GO BACK TO THE FORUM LEADERS AND ALERT THEM TO THE CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR AUGUST DECISIONS AND OUTLINE TO THEM THE OPTIONS NOW OPEN TO THEM. BUT HE HAS NOT WRITTEN TO SPEC YET.

3. COMMENT. IN OUR VIEW THE FOREGOING IS AS STRAIGHT A STORY ABOUT

CURRENT FIJIAN THINKING OR JK'S OWN AS ONE CAN GET FROM HIM
IN THE OBVIOUS ABSENCE OF ANY DECISIONS BY RATU MARA. THE
FISHERIES TEAM SHOULD HAVE AN INTERESTING TIME TALKING WITH HIM
WE WILL PROFIT LISTENING.
CONDON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FISHERIES, NEGOTIATIONS, ESTABLISHMENT OF OFFICES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978SUVA00619
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780165-0315
Format: TEL
From: SUVA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780443/aaaabkbs.tel
Line Count: 121
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 59a08bab-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION OES
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 95661
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2926817
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL FISHERY AGENCY
TAGS: EFIS, PLOS, FJ
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/59a08bab-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014